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Department of State

A70 INCOMING TELEGRAM

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E.O. 12065: GDS 10/7/86 (CLARE, DANIEL) OR-P
TAGS: SNAR, PINT, PE
SUBJECT: CONSCIOUSNESS RAISING ON DRUG FRONT

1. (LOU) SUMMARY. PERU'S MOST RESPECTED NEWSWEEKLY SENSATIONALIZED THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN A GOVERNING PARTY SENATOR AND A NOTORIOUS DRUG DEALER IN ORDER TO BRING INTO THE OPEN CONCERNS THAT THE BELAUNDE ADMINISTRATION HAS NOT GIVEN ADEQUATE ATTENTION TO THE NARCOTICS PROBLEM. THE MAGAZINE ALSO HIGHLIGHTED AMBASSADOR CORR'S INTEREST IN NARCOTICS CONTROL. END SUMMARY.

2. (U) OCTOBER 6 "CARETAS" COVER STORY BUILDS UPON A MEETING BETWEEN AN INVESTIGATIVE POLICE (PIP) GENERAL AND AN ACCION POPULAR (AP) SENATOR IN MID-JULY. ACCORDING TO THE REPORT, SENATOR EDUARDO YASHIMURA PRESSED THE PIP TO "ACCELERATE" ITS PROCESSING OF A CASE INVOLVING GUILLERMO CARDENAS DAVILA, BEING HELD WHILE THE PIP SORTED OUT VARIOUS CHARGES PENDING AGAINST HIM.

3. (U) THE STORY THEN GOES INTO A DETAILED RECITATION OF CARDENAS' GROWING FIANCIAL EMPIRE, WHICH HAS CONVERTED THE OFT-CHARGED NARCOTICS TRAFFICKER INTO ONE OF THE WEALTHIEST AND MOST INFLUENTIAL FIGURES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SAN MARTIN. BASED AT THE SMALL VILLAGE OF BELLAVISTA, CARDENAS SPREAD MONEY THROUGH THE NEARBY FLOURISHING CITY OF TARAPOTO. CARDENAS ENLISTED YASHIMURA AS HIS LAWYER IN 1978, WHEN THE POLITICIAN LOST THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT'S DESIGNATION AS MAYOR OF TARAPOTO AFTER GREETING A CAMPAIGNING FERNANDO BELAUNDE TOO WARMLY. YASHIMURA SUBSEQUENTLY WON ELECTION TO THE SENATE IN MAY 1980 UNDER THE AP BANNER. HE REPORTEDLY INCLUDED CARDENAS -- TECHNICALLY STILL BEING SOUGHT BY POLICE -- ON AT LEAST ONE TOUR THROUGH HIS DISTRICT.

4. (U) THE FEATURE ARTICLE GOES ON TO DESCRIBE THE OVERALL DIMENSIONS OF THE NARCOTICS TRAFFIC, ASSERTING THAT CARDENAS ONCE SAID PUBLICLY THAT IF THE GOVERNMENT WOULD STAY OFF HIS BACK HE ALONE COULD RESOLVE PERU'S EXTERNAL DEBT BURDEN. "CARETAS" ALSO POINTS TO OVERT COMMUNIST PARTY SUPPORT FOR INCREASING COCA PRODUCTION BY LEFTISTS IN THE FAMED TINGO MARIA AREA.

5. (U) IN PASSING, THE STORY OBSERVED THAT AMBASSADOR CORR'S DESIGNATION IS RELEVANT: "HE IS A CAREER DIPLOMAT BUT HE HAS JUST SERVED AS DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS AFFAIRS." A RATHER PROMINENT PHOTOGRAPH OF AMBASSADOR CORR ACCOMPANYING THE ARTICLE EMPHASIZED THE U.S. INTEREST.

6. (U) PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE, OSCAR TRELLES, EXPRESSED HIS FULL CONFIDENCE TO THE MEDIA THAT YASHIMURA WOULD ESTABLISH THAT HE HAD DONE NOTHING WRONG. YASHIMURA HIMSELF HAD NOT RESURFACED FROM A FIELD TRIP IN SAN MARTIN.

[redacted]

8. (LOU) NOR IS "CARETAS" ALONE IN FINDING SIGNIFICANCE IN THE DESIGNATION OF AMBASSADOR CORR. A NUMBER OF OUR CONTACTS ALSO HAVE REMARKED ON HIS EXPERIENCE IN THE DRUG CONTROL FIELD.

9. (LOU) COINCIDENTLY, ECONCONS AND ARA/AND DEPUTY COUNTRY DIRECTOR FOUND THEMSELVES IN TARAPOTO THE DAY THE MAGAZINE APPEARED. THEY WERE VISITING THE AID SUPPORTED SPECIAL PROJECT FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN HUALLAGA CENTRAL AND BAJO MAYO. CARDENAS' EXPLOITS WERE COMMON KNOWLEDGE AND MOST OF THOSE CONTACTED BY THE PAIR ASSUMED THEY HAD ADVANCE NOTICE AND WERE INVESTIGATING THE CARETAS STORY.

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